

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 731

By Pody

A RESOLUTION to honor the late Noel Gray Yelton upon his induction into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, agriculture has been a cornerstone of Wilson County since the county's founding in 1799, and those citizens involved in farming have always been a vital part of the community; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly specially recognize those outstanding citizens who dedicate their lives to promoting the importance of agriculture in our society; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable individual was the late Noel Gray Yelton of Laguardo, who has been inducted into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame for his hard work and commitment to continuing the legacy of the family farm in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, born on June 12, 1937, in Nashville, Noel Gray Yelton was the son of Clarence Gray and Irene Hayes Yelton and was raised on the family farm in Laguardo with his twin sister, Neva Elton White, his brother, Guy Yelton, and his sister, Peggy Yelton; and

WHEREAS, as a boy, Noel Yelton loved farming from day one, as he helped harvest crops, plowed gardens, fixed broken farm equipment, and attended to numerous other farm chores; and

WHEREAS, a 1956 graduate of Mt. Juliet High School, Noel Yelton was an active member of the school's chapter of the Future Farmers of America (FFA), which he served as vice president and president under the direction of Bill Coley, his teacher and FFA advisor who helped inspire his lifelong love of farming; and

WHEREAS, proudly enlisting in the United States Army after graduation, Mr. Yelton missed the opportunity to receive his FFA American Farmer Degree at the annual FFA convention, as he had to leave for boot camp before the awards were distributed; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Yelton returned to Laguardo after completing his military service and resumed his life as a farmer, raising cows and hogs and growing hay and tobacco; he was named Wilson County's Outstanding Young Farmer in 1961; and

WHEREAS, Noel Yelton and his beloved wife, Johnnie Mae Wright, raised their two children, Allen Gray Yelton and Angela Yelton Elder, on the family farm in Laguardo, instilling in them a love of the land and livestock; and

WHEREAS, in 1978, Noel Yelton was named the Wilson County Soil Conservation District's Outstanding Conservation Farmer of the Year, at which time he was farming 350 acres, growing four and one-half acres of tobacco irrigated by a farm pond he had recently built, and renting an additional 100 acres for his cattle; and

WHEREAS, Noel Yelton passed down the love of farming to his children before his untimely death on April 23, 1983; his son, Allen Gray Yelton, father of his grandson Gus Yelton, continues to raise cattle and grow hay on the land his father once farmed, and his daughter, Angela Yelton Elder, lives on a small farm in Georgia with her husband, Brian, and their children, Katy Mae Elder and Noel Elder; and

WHEREAS, the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame honors those dedicated citizens who committed their lives to developing and maintaining the highest standards and principles in their chosen vocation, and it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly honor the memory of Noel Yelton for his valuable service to agriculture and the farming community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor the late Noel Gray Yelton upon his induction into the

Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame, reflecting fondly upon his many contributions to upholding the agricultural traditions of Wilson County and the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.